

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-01 INR-07
L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15
USIA-06 EB-08 OMB-01 TRSE-00 ACDA-12 /080 W
-----071798 170143Z /14

R 161254Z DEC 77
FM AMEMBASSY MADRID
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2849
INFO AMEMBASSY BELGRADE
AMEMBASSY BERLIN
AMEMBASSY BUCHAREST
AMEMBASSY BUDAPEST
AMEMBASSY MOSCOW
AMEMBASSY PRAGUE
AMEMBASSY SOFIA
AMEMBASSY WARSAW

C O N F I D E N T I A L MADRID 10134

E.O. 11652 XGDS-1
TAGS: PFOR, SP, XH
SUBJECT: SPANISH EASTERN EUROPEAN COM CONFERENCE

1. DISCUSSING WITH US THE CONFERENCE DECEMBER 13-14 IN MADRID OF SPAIN'S AMBASSADORS IN EASTERN EUROPE, THE FOREIGN MINISTRY'S CHIEF FOR THE REGION (PEREZ GOMEZ) DOWNPLAYED ITS SIGNIFICANCE, CALLING IT SIMPLY AN OCCASION FOR CONSIDERING IN A COHESIVE WAY WHERE MATTERS STOOD APPROXIMATELY ONE YEAR AFTER THE ESTABLISHMENT (OR RE-ESTABLISHMENT) OF DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS WITH THOSE COUNTRIES.

2. OVERALL, HE SAID, SPAIN WAS MOVING TO BRING ITS RELATIONS WITH THE AREA UP TO A MORE NORMAL CONDITION. TRADE WAS FAR BELOW WHAT IT COULD OR EVEN SHOULD BE, AND THERE WERE CONSIDERABLE PROSPECTS. FURTHERMORE, HE
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WENT ON, THIS PERIOD OF RENEWED OPPORTUNITY FOR TRADE WITH THE EAST COINCIDED WITH RISING PROTECTIONIST TENDENCIES AND MEASURES IN SEVERAL WESTERN COUNTRIES, AND THE RESULT WAS AN INCREASE, FANNED TO A DEGREE BY DEMAGOGY, OF FEELING WITHIN SPAIN THAT SOLUTIONS, OR AT LEAST Hugely interesting economic opportunities, lay to the east. (while not sparing the US in this run-down,

PEREZ SPECIFICALLY CITED THE EC AS THE PRINCIPAL CULPRIT IN RAISING ECONOMIC BARRIERS ONCE THE POLITICAL ONES HAD COME DOWN.)

3. ON THE POLITICAL SIDE, SAID PEREZ, SPAIN WAS IN NO DOUBT ABOUT ITS IDENTITY AS A WESTERN COUNTRY, GEOGRAPHICALLY, CULTURALLY, AND POLITICALLY (IN HAVING OPTED FOR A MULTI-PARTY DEMOCRATIC SYSTEM). THUS THERE COULD BE NO QUESTION OF SPAIN'S BECOMING A KIND OF CUBA OF EUROPE. ON THE OTHER HAND, HE CONTINUED, THE COUNTRY STILL HAD TO DECIDE ABOUT ITS FUTURE SECURITY RELATIONSHIP IN ACCORDANCE WITH DEMOCRATIC PROCESSES. IF THE COUNTRY CHOSE TO ENTER NATO, THAT WOULD IMPACT ON SPAIN'S RELATIONS WITH THE EAST IN CERTAIN WAYS; IF THE CHOICE WERE SOME KIND OF NEUTRALITY, PEREZ SAID, HE IMAGINED A POSITION SIMILAR TO SWEDEN'S WOULD BE THE LIKELY RESULT.

4. PEREZ CONFIRMED A NEWS STORY TO THE EFFECT THAT ALL THE AMBASSADORS HAD REPORTED POSSIBLE ENTRY INTO NATO AS THE TOPIC THEY HEARD MOST ABOUT. THE SOVIETS HAD BEEN FOREMOST IN THIS REGARD, HE SAID, UNTIL THE SPANISH HAD CUT THEM OFF WITH A FIRM REMINDER THAT THE MATTER WAS STRICTLY FOR INTERNAL DECISION. STABLER

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01-Jan-1994 12:00:00 am
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: MEETINGS, COMMUNISTS, MEETING REPORTS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Sent Date: 16-Dec-1977 12:00:00 am
Decaption Date: 01-Jan-1960 12:00:00 am
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 22 May 2009
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1977MADRID10134
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: X1
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D770470-0431
Format: TEL
From: MADRID
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1977/newtext/t19771247/aaaabntw.tel
Line Count: 85
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: 06b94c02-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ACTION EUR
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 10-Mar-2005 12:00:00 am
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 206896
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: SPANISH EASTERN EUROPEAN COM CONFERENCE
TAGS: PFOR, PINT, SP, XH
To: STATE
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odb://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/06b94c02-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
22 May 2009
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 22 May 2009